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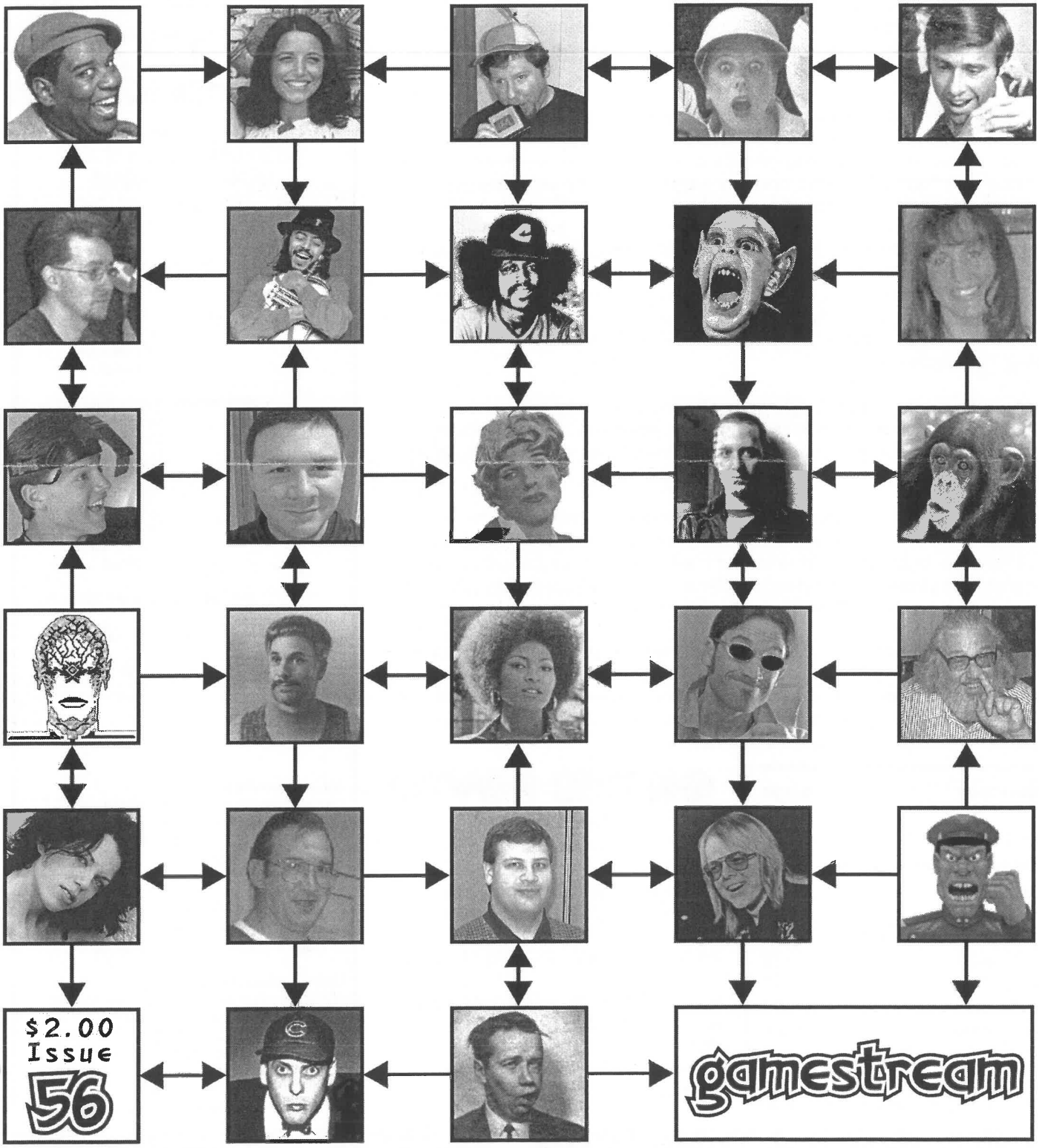

# Gamestream.
## Editor's BLURB by Dave Giarrusso

Happy New Year, gang! Hopefully our first issue for 2004 finds you all healthy, wealthy and wise, and gaming ON into the next year.

2003 was a nutty year for gaming, wasn't it? Judging by the backlog of games that I purchased toward the end of the year, but haven't yet played, I'm wondering if there were more "sales" and cheaper games to be had around the holidays than in previous years. I guess I'll find out about the "cheap" part when the credit card bills show up, eh?

We tried a little experiment with this issue, so you'll have to let us know if you loved it or hated it, or anything in between. We all put our heads together for another go at a "blurb-a-thon" styled issue, a la DP #30. You might remember that the theme for that issue was "no real theme," and that we just blurbed a bit at the computer until we had an issue full of blurbing!

For this issue, we went back to that sort of idea, BUT... we put a slightly different spin on it this time out. This time, we all gathered around the virtual water cooler and blurbed like bubbling (blurbbling?) brooks to each other until the cooler was empty and the water... well until the water needed to be recycled. As we were all on the same schedule, we concluded that the name for this issue could only be one thing: "gamestream."

Not really. But I digress... which is right on par for this issue. So let me digress a bit more... Something just occurred to me about my gaming in 2003. Specifically, the single console game I played the most during this past year was **Beach Spikers**. And I'm not sure why.

Sure, it's a great game. But so is **Ms. Pac-Man** or **Millipede**. Spikers isn't "new" (brand new, anyway) and it wasn't making the lists of "must haves" put out by some of the other publications. So what kept me coming back to it more than anything else this year? The competition? The ease of introducing new gamers to the play? The simple fact that we've got scores of bikini-clad babes to watch?

I really don't know. It's probably "D: all of the above." Anyhoo, (how's this for a gamestreaming non sequitur?) you won't find any game reviews (per se) this time out, but rest assured that we'll be back with several reviews in the pages of DP57: portable in just a couple of months. So get out there and get into the gamestream - it spills over from here on to page six. Game ON.

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## ON THE COVER

**Gamestream!**
**by Dave Giarrusso**

Who's the next contestant to jump into the gamestream? Could it be that girl down the block? Could it be the guy in the supermarket? Could it be YOU?

It's everyone! Agree with us! Disagree with us! Blurb utter nonsense about games! But whatever you do, just come on in. The water's always fine in the gamestream.

DIGITAL PRESS # 56
JAN / FEB 2004

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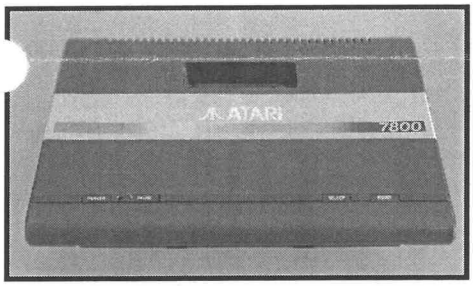
## Atari 7800 superior system

I love your Digital Press Guide. Keep up the great work.

One note though: repeat after me! THE NES WAS NOT A SUPERIOR SYSTEM TO THE ATARI 7800! :-)

I'm tired of writers writing that the 7800 was "out of date" or "had inferior hardware". The 7800 and NES were designed around the same time.




**The Atari 7800 ProSystem. Superior or not, the NES has a million games to the 7800s sixty.**

If you look at the hardware closely, they have the same capabilities, more or less.

Yes, the NES has significantly better sound. It also has 1/5 the colors and flickers like a banshee when moving more than a few sprites at once. The processor in the systems is the same.

That is not "a superior system."

The NES's superiority comes in the calibre of games and the number of developers writing for it vs. the 7800. If the 7800 had the same number of developers the same support from the manufacturer and the same development budgets, what do you think the games would have been like?

Quit pinning it on the hardware! ;-) The Tramiels had more to do with the 7800's failure than anything on the motherboard. - Mark Rathwell

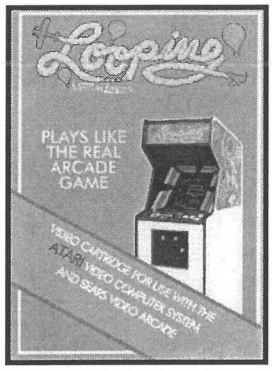
**Hi Mark,**

**I agree with you completely. I'll have to go back and see how that was worded, it was never intended to be stated that the NES *HARDWARE* is superior.**

**Thanks for the note and enjoy your book! - Joe**

## Got Expo Game?

Hopefully any new games that are released at the CGE will be available through the website as was done for the last expo. Will this be the case? - Troy Whelan


Looping
PLAYS LIKE THE REAL ARCADE GAME
VIDEO CARTRIDGE FOR USE WITH THE ATARI VIDEO COMPUTER SYSTEM AND SEARS VIDEO ARCADE

**Atari 2600 Looping was released by CGE Services at CGE2K3.**

**Do you mean the games specifically released by CGE Services (like last year's Looping, Rush Hour and Entity)? New releases by CGE Services will be available after the show provided they do not sell out at the show. As for other vendors, we can't speak for them. I know that a few titles sold out at their debut last year and were not available afterwards, like Vectrex War of the Robots and Atari 5200 Klax. - Joe**

## Calling all Classics

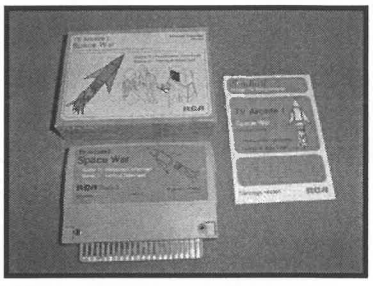
Hey DP, had to write with a thank you and complaint (well balanced, the Force is,yes...).

After months and months and MONTHS of not a single issue of DP, imagine my shock of receiving not one but THREE well written issues! My renewed subscription is in da mail!

However... the thing I've always and forever loved about DP is its reviews / opinions / articles of CLASSIC games. Games from the 80's and 90's... but lately it seems I open up the monthly (after getting the staples out) only to find 70% or mnore NEW game reviews and OPs. Heck, I can go out and buy EGM if I want to know how good **Gundam** or **Soul Calbar** is (sorry if I shortened or mispelled), but I do not even OWN any new system beyond the GB Advance. C'mon, guys and gals, lets slant this back twords more CLASSic games with CLASS.

How about a review of **ROBOT WAR** for Channel F or better yet, **SPACE WAR** for the extremely popular RCA Studio One! Seriously....we ALL know how good or bad **Grand Theft Auto** is, but I've never even SEEN Robot War. It is just much more interesting to read about these old "gems"... no, I don't mean to dis the new games entirely, just balance it more.

Game ON, bros! - David Allen




**Space War for the RCA Studio One.**

**Greets, David! Thanks for your comments on the 'zine!**

**A few other readers have voiced similar thoughts on the "old vs. new" gaming issue and it got me thinking about whether or not we really HAVE changed all that much. I took a look back through our last several issues the other day to get to the bottom of things (and I found a couple of spiders in there too! Ack!).**

**While there are some reviews of "new" games, I'd wager that we actually cover fewer modern console games than we have in the past. Percentage-wise, the highest new-to-old ratio I could find over the last few issues was 60% new to 40% old in issue 53. By comparison, issue 55 contained 25% new to 75% old game reviews. However, in determining these numbers, I'm dubbing a Saturn game like Die Hard Arcade to be "old" at this point (has it really been seven years since DHA was released?! Gah!) so your mileage might vary, but... consider this bit of info for a moment.**

**In 1991 when we were just starting out, we were writing about and dissecting games from a mere seven years earlier, too: the "classic" stuff from the 2600, Intellivision, ColecoVision and so on. Which leads**

**me to my next half-a-thought...**

**It could be that the perception has shifted between then and now. In 1991 SNES and Genesis games were big and the 3DO and Jag were just hitting the scene a few years later. But if you dust off those old issues, you'll see that we covered lots of those games when they were new - roughly the same number of XBox, GC and PS2 games that we gab about now.**

**I always like to hear what my gaming bros and sisters think about games, new or old. Sure, all the mags at the local bookshops talk about the latest stuff, but I'd bet that few of them will bring up the nuances that our capable staff might pick up on. And ever since our very first issue, we've always played everything. We love the "classics" as much or more than anyone, but there are certainly lots of "modern classics" out there right now and as insatiable gamers, we couldn't sleep at night if we let them go unnoticed.**

**We'll always have a healthy mix of gaming eras here in the pages of DP, and I think that over time it will remain as balanced as it ever was (or wasn't!)**

**As for the old games, where else are you gonna find a review of the old coin-op Freeze? It's no Space War, but it's darn close. :) Thanks for readin' and writing in, and game ON, brother! - Dave**

## Missing Items?

Dear Digital Press,

I had a few questions about some omissions in your Guide.

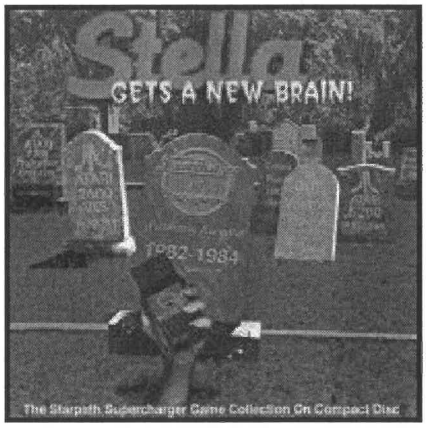
1. The **Stella Gets a New Brain** compilation CD for the Starpath on the 2600. I did not see this anywhere. It came out in '96 and has every Starpath game and prototypes on one cd. The cd's are also numbered. Very nice.

2. **Survival Run** for the 2600. Did not find this cart listed.

3. Why do you not list C64 game disks as well. I have over 100 boxed C64 games that I would love to know some sort of rarity for them, especially all all my **Ultimas**.

4. Sega Master system Non-US released games.

Thanks for your time. Love the site and love the Guide. - Paul

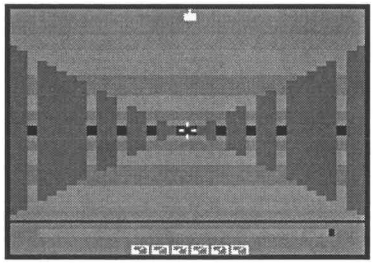



**Stella Gets a New Brain! Eww! Brain!**

**Hi Paul!**

**You've got questions? We've got answers!**

**1. It's intentional. I suppose it could go in the "non-cartridge items" section but it's really more of an emulation item than an Atari 2600 product. For the same reason, I wouldn't put someone's homemade CD with Z26 and ROMZ in the book. Another factor: though it will probably stay under the radar, it's illegal to sell those games on CD without permission. I was recently given a "cease and desist" from Atari who forced me to remove many of the Atari 2600 games I had available for FREE online - how do you think they'd react to sales of their games? Probably best that I don't do anything to draw attention to that product, cool as it is!**



**Milton Bradley's Survival Run for the Atari 2600.**

**2. Check out the online addendum: http://www.digitpress.com/lists.htm. Corrections and additions to the book sections are continually maintained in this printable online supplement.**

**3. It's an area that is so vast that it's not something our rag-tag team will be able to compile with any degree of accuracy. If you open the C64 diskette avenue up then you'd have to consider thousands and thousands of European releases as well (or at least be able to differentiate between them and the US releases). It's just too big for us.**

**4. It's in the online addendum referenced above, as well as the import TG-16 (PC Engine), both of these sections were cut to keep the book at 512 pages. Thanks for your feedback! These things really help us stay on course, or at least plot one! :) Game on, brother. - Joe**

## Pricing Predicament

Hello,

I purchased the [DP Guide] Seventh Edition a few weeks ago and have been using it avidly on a daily basis. It's an awesome guide. I have my own on-line vintage gaming shop called Vintage Fun World and use this guide as the bible to how I price my items.

I had one question about the prices of the consoles. In the Guide it shows the suggested price of a console, but I'm unsure if it's the console only or the console with all the hookups (joysticks/ controllers, power supply, TV switchbox, etc). I'm trying to price my consoles according to this but not sure if I should charge more for a ready to go setup with all the hookups or not. Any help will be greatly appreciated on this. Thanks! - Chris Spry

**Hi Chris,**

**Glad to hear you're getting good use from your Guide. We're presently working on a "1989 and up" Guide for this year, that should help round things out :) Two points to make.**

**1. The console prices assume the necessary hookups are in place (power supply, RF switchbox/cable) though not necessarily a controller. That should be factored in separately.**

**2. If you're a DEALER you might consider upping our prices a bit. Our book is priced for collectors, ie "the lowest possible price you should find this for". If you're sticking with the prices then I want to shop at your store!**

**Let me know if I can be of further assistance. - Joe**

***Got a gripe? Thinking of thanking us? Cooking up a question? Address all your eloquent e-mails to us at digitalpress@email.com. If we respond to your letter in a fantastic future issue, you'll be able to brag to your fun-lovin' friends and family!***

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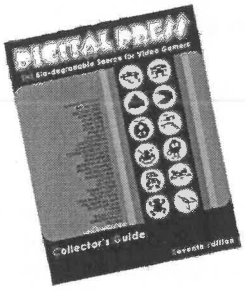


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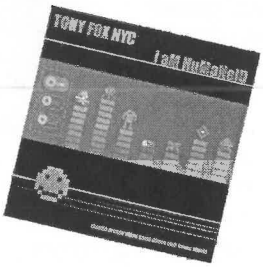


Some video game publications pride themselves on being there "first". We're a little different. Since Digital Press readers consist primarily of multi-system owners of hundreds (some of us thousands) of game cartridges and discs, our world has become one where time is meaningless and being "first" doesn't count. Atari 2600 and PlayStation2 games can be reviewed on the same page. We are fans of gaming, not of any particular system. Do you have a constant desire to play? Then JOIN US - subscribe now! It's STILL just twelve bucks for six issues.

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# GAMESTREAM!

## Take it away, Joe!

About a week ago I was asked by a website administrator to contribute to a project. He asked me to talk about my three favorite games of 2003.

I opened up a new document, and I thought about it for awhile.

As it turns out, I haven't PLAYED three games released in 2003. I've dabbled, I've examined, and I've even tinkered. But I haven't PLAYED. And the few games that I have played a little - like **Top Spin**, **D&D Heroes**, **F-Zero GX**, **Viewtiful Joe**... had I played them enough to judge them? And should I judge them when I have nothing to judge against?

What is happening to me?

I stared at that blank screen for a few minutes more, and finally I typed:

1. **Night Stalker** (Intellivision)
2. **Dig Dug** (arcade)
3. **Donkey Kong 3** (NES)

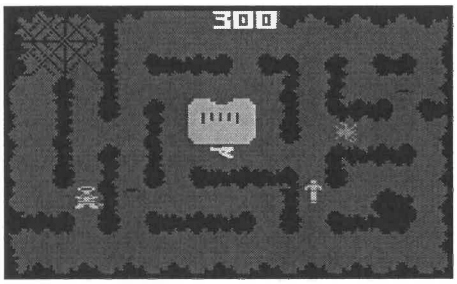
I'll tell you what's happened to me. I'm drifting further and further away from modern games as I sink deeper and deeper into the classic gaming gamestream. It's not for the obvious reasons. I'm not going to give that old-schooler mantra "the old games are better because they're simpler". While that may be true, it's not MY reason.

I stared at what I had typed for a bit longer.

No, it's because I have less time than ever to PLAY but the same desire to do so as I've ever had. When I was thinking "have I played the games of 2003 ENOUGH" made me draw a conclusion about how gaming has changed, how I have changed... back THEN, there was really no such thing. If you played Night Stalker, Dig Dug, or Donkey Kong 3 for a half hour, you were versed enough in the game to know if you were going to like it or hate it. It didn't matter how it ended, and your proficiency was entirely based on how much you practiced the game. It didn't matter if you logged fifty hours into them, you STILL weren't going to see the end. So my three favorite games of 2003 are games that I "re-discovered" in 2003.

I stared for just a moment more, turned the computer off, and went back to a game of Night Stalker.

As I played, I wondered if there were any other games that I needed to "rediscover," for 2004...




**Joe's most played game for 2003: Intellivision classic, Night Stalker. Surprised?**

## Up next: Larry Anderson

... which brings up another interesting area of rediscovery, which is what got me into, then out of, then back into this hobby several times over the past few years. Allow me to elaborate a bit...

It was rediscovery that originally got me into classic gaming; opening up a closet drawer that had sat neglected for six or seven years and finding my old Atari 2600 and it's various pieces and parts. After plugging it in for still more rediscovery, I thought "Wow, these games MUST be dirt cheap by now"... and so the rest is history. I'm sure almost every collector has a similar story or catalyst that describes how they got into this wonderful hobby.

But what if it wasn't rediscovery, but an accident? What could be that accidental event that got YOU into retrogaming?

## Up next: Dave G

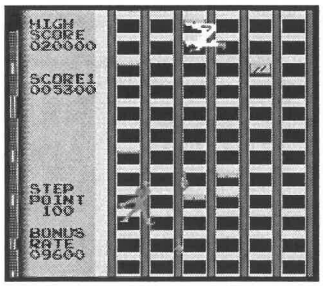
Lots to blab about here! Lesee...

I think the mighty Bob Ross would have referred to them as "Happy Accidents," and by gum, that's just what they were!

The catalyst that got me going was one of those flea market runs whose original intention was something other than a video game hunt. But when I (quite by accident!) spied a ColecoVision and several CV carts on that fateful summer afternoon, and when I found out just how "low, low, low" the price was, I couldn't pass up the lot. At the time, I really figured that the vendor was going to still want half or more of the original price for that high-tech machine. Oh how wrong I was. And to think, I almost didn't even ask him about the price!

The rest, as they say, and as Larry just said, is history.

Speaking of history, one game that immediately springs to mind as a good 2004 re-discovery candidate is a classic coin-op that I "re-discovered" in 2003 (largely due to the efforts of one Mr. Ian Baronofsky): **Crazy Climber**.




**Dave, and (possibly) Ian, are crazy. So it shouldn't surprise you that they both dig Crazy Climber.**

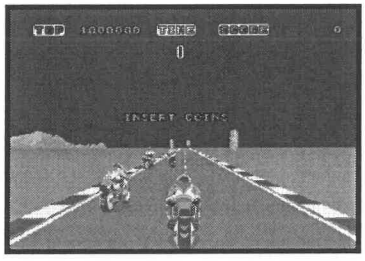
While we were at CGE this past summer, Ian mentioned that he'd been gettin' busy with the Wonderswan version of Crazy Climber. CGE also just happened to have a Crazy Climber cocktail game on the show floor, so we battled it out for a few rounds. I had always admired Crazy Climber from afar, but I was never much good at it. It wasn't

until Ian had explained a lot of the subtle gameplay points to me that I really "got it," but after CGE, Crazy Climber quickly climbed to the top of my 2003 favorites list. I spent about three months after CGE playing Crazy Climber like... well like crazy! Maybe it was just an attempt to make up for lost time with one of the all time classics. Maybe it was a lack of "game time" as of late, what with work, and more work, and STILL more work. Maybe it was just the predestined pairing of me and any game with "crazy" in the title – refer to my continuing exploits with the likes of **Wacko** and the **Crazy Taxi** series – is there a pattern here? Whatever the reason, I definitely spent a lot of time on Crazy Climber in 2003 and would highly recommend it as a re-discovery game.

But the other games I logged in lots of time with in 2003 (i.e., really PLAYED) were spaced out over a handful of "post-80s" systems: **Ikaruga**, **Beach Spikers**, **Super Monkey Ball** (all on the 'Cube), **Space Harrier** (32X), **Super Punch Out!!** (SNES), **The House of the Dead** (Saturn), **Die Hard Arcade** (Saturn) and, along with the rest of the free world, **WarioWare, Inc.** (GBA).

**Even flying through actual SPACE couldn't be HARRIER than playing this game. Right?**

Looking back on this list, the pattern I see first is the "short-attention span" thing popping up yet again. All of these games can be played immediately with little or no fuss, but to truly master them... ahh, that takes a bit of time. It also strikes me that there are lots of "newer" games on the list, but I'm wondering if that's because of a short-term memory lapse, or because I really did log more time on Beach Spikers than on **Super Pac-Man**? It's definitely possible. But aren't all these games just "modern classics" after all? Won't a college kid stumble across someone else's lot of Dreamcast or Cube games fifteen years from now at a flea market and keep this whole thing going in perpetuity?



**HANG ON there, bub. There's more to Shenmue than just the classic arcade. Right?**

## Up next: Monique Trulson

Oh absolutely, but it's not just about college kids stumbling upon such finds, but also about those of us with "the bug" passing it down to the next generation, like in my household. You'd think that kids these days, with access to visually stunning games on all the latest consoles, would turn their noses up at games from "WAY BACK WHEN, you know Mommy, when YOU were little"...but we're finding it to be exactly opposite. For some reason, my son finds all the retro games fascinating, and tries to find them in all the current games we have.

Just a few examples: **Animal Crossing** - he plays that just to play the retro games you can collect/buy. He's getting to be quite the **Excitebike** player! And then there's **Shenmue** - nothing pleases him more than directing Ryo to the arcades, where he can play **Hang On** to his heart's content. **Pac Man World 2** - he is quickly bored by the actual game, but he plays so that he can get at the classics stored away in there - **Pac Man**, **Ms. Pac Man**, **Pac Attack** and **Pac Mania**!

So you can imagine his excitement when we inherited a Sega Genesis and Sega Master System from my sister-in-law, along with a variety of games. They sit proudly next to our **Pong**, nestled in with the Dreamcast, PS2, Xbox and GameCube, and more often than not are the cause of many screams of laughter and excitement when his friends come over. Why? Because to them it's new, it's "cool", it's something they can't play all the time, and to be honest, many of the games are easier for the younger crowd.

We won't be trading in any of our systems, or games, because later on, he can pass these down to HIS children, and infect yet another generation with the gaming itch. And I'll be right there next to him, showing no mercy to my future grandchildren as I kick their butts in whatever game we play...now if that isn't something to look forward to, then what is?

## Up next: Ian Baronofsky

I specifically got into classic gaming because even seven or eight years ago (with no familiarity as to the state of modern games), I knew that I didn't have time to play games for eight hours in a clip. I have time in thirty minute increments,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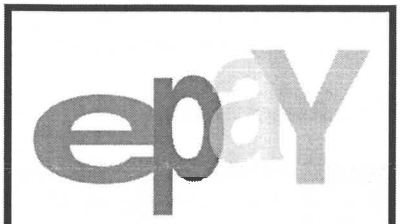


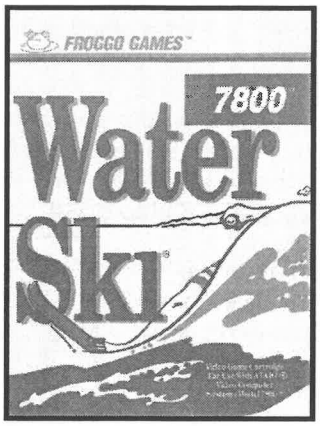


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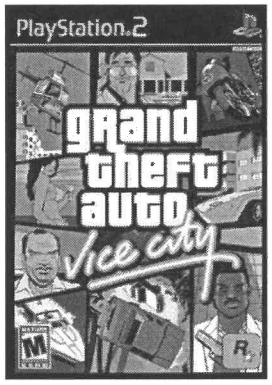
sometimes an hour more when I'm shorting myself on sleep or ignoring other responsibilities. Will I finish **FFX** in eight or ten months at that rate? Maybe. Only games like **GTA3 and GTA Vice City** that are SO good that I HAVE to play them can overcome the long term commitment issues.

I would say that we are gamers with 'commitment issues.' Most of us like to play an epic game occasionally, but we also like a quick fix.

And we're far from alone. Sales of all-in-one joysticks/games are pretty good.

I, too, couldn't tell you my top three FROM 2003, because I must have ten releases from 2003, of which I've played only three of for any significant time.

And to Dave: " Oh noooo!" And there comes an idea for a Crazy Climber hack: Crazy Mr. Bill Climber.



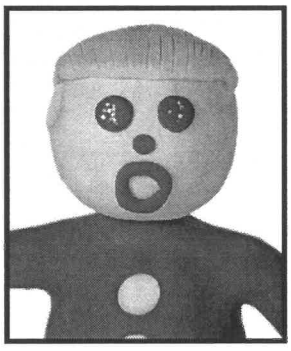

**GTA Vice City is SO good that Ian gave up mowing the lawn. For a year.**

## Up next: Russ Perry Jr.

We're still trying to find the Data Age **Mr. Bill** game aren't we?

I'm definitely with the others as far as time constraints go... I haven't played much this year, and worse, some of what I've played has been thwarted by failing parts – my 2600 power supply is apparently giving up the ghost, which has weird effects on certain games like **Skeleton** and **Star Fire** (both homebrews), and my Dreamcast won't read certain discs.

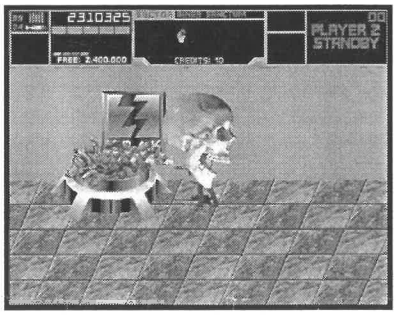
At least it still reads Crazy Taxi. That's one of my favorite newer games... The thing is, you don't need to read the instruction booklet, and that's a big plus in my mind. I don't know which came first, the lack of time, or the lack of ambition/concentration, but I simply don't want to have to spend a lot of time preparing to play a game. There are still things to learn in the game, which may require me reading the booklet, but the point is I don't have to, and I can still have a satisfying game.



**Oh Noooo! We haven't found the 2600 Mr. Bill cart. YET...**

And what's funny is that a lot of the time I don't even play Crazy Taxi – I play the "Crazy Box" (or "Crazy Pyramid" in **Crazy Taxi 2**) minigames, which are even shorter. Even then, I don't keep trying at the one or two challenges that I'll probably never be able to complete, but I play the ones that are more fun, and try to do better and better.

New games? I don't think I've played ANY games from 2003, unless you count homebrew 2600 games, and I haven't even played them much this year. In fact, I couldn't even come up with a top three for last year. I'd have to say Crazy Taxi and **Worms: Armageddon**, and that's it. I'm sure hoping to find more time this year, as I'd like to get in some heavy time on Ikuraga and a few other things. Will it happen? Dunno. I'd like to finally try out those joystick games Ian mentions, which brings me to the next subject...




**Classic N.A.R.C. Will Midway's new "update" be nifty, or name-only?**

Why can't they get these right? I can't believe they'd make small changes and not think we'd notice, or care. Or worse, that they'd make a paddle game into a joystick game and think it's just as good, or in some cases, playable. Though I love the idea of these things, it looks like the manufacturers are treating them a bit like a get-rich scheme. That bothers me, and I know I'm not the only one. So when will they ever consult their likely audience?

At least it looks like Activision is getting it right, or pretty close, with their Anthology – now even including prototypes and homebrew games. Does any other retro product do better? Any other impressive efforts I might have missed?

## Up next: Joe

The **Activision Anthologies** are pretty impressive, I like what they did with the homebrew games added for the GBA but you know what? I've been playing 2600 emulation on my GP32 for almost a year already and there are way more games to play that way. Know what else? I've been playing my actual 2600 much longer than that, and ultimately this is where I always wind up.

I'm saying that I'm not impressed any longer with compilations of ANY kind. I'm glad they're made, because they introduce people to the classics and bring some nostalgics back into the loop, but for me? No thanks. The arcade games are ultimately better on MAME and the console games will never have the feel of the real thing and are little more than a convenience on a platform like the PS2.

What I would like to see more of are classics "reborn". I loved what they did with the **Prince of Persia** title (though as I mentioned before I wish I could just sit down for a few hours and play the thing), liked what they did with **Rygar**, and **Spy Hunter** before that, and going further back: **Tempest** and **Xevious** and **Q*Bert**... I wish this trend would continue.

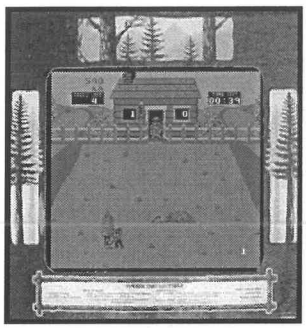
So let me ask the next person in the gamestream: what classic would you like to see updated, and how do you envision it being done?

## Up next: Dave

I always thought that **N.A.R.C.** would be a nifty game to do an updated version of... right up until they announced

*Continued from page 8*

that they were actually doing it. I'm not thrilled with what I've seen so far. More often than not, when someone puts a "new spin" on an old game, "new spin" automatically translates into "first or third person 3D fest." Sometimes it works out, many times it doesn't. The new N.A.R.C. appears to fall into the "we're just using the brand name" category of updates. It strikes me as more of a **Max Payne/Dead To Rights** wannabe than something we played at the arcade all those years ago. Where's the twitchy ACTION of the original?



**Who's up for a Timber update? Whatsa matter? You don't have the CHOPS for it? *cough***

If they put together a N.A.R.C update that was, essentially N.A.R.C. II, I'd be thrilled. I dig the updates that follow in the footsteps of **Xevious 3D/G+** or **Contra: Shattered Soldier**. For N.A.R.C., they could leave it a 2D side scroller game but use updated rendered graphics that fit the same style of the original. I picture something like the jump from **MK** to **MKII** – same idea, more stylized approach that improves upon the original look without going to "ultra-photo-realistic." It should still look like a game.

Since that would never fly, other candidates for the "new, old" games would include arcade stuff with crazy hardware. What about a **Kickman** update that includes a unicycle styled apparatus for the gamer to use to pedal back and forth? "Keep an eye on the 'balance meter!'" Anyone up for a **Timber** update that includes some sort of virtual tree-chopping setup? What other obvious classic updates am I missing?

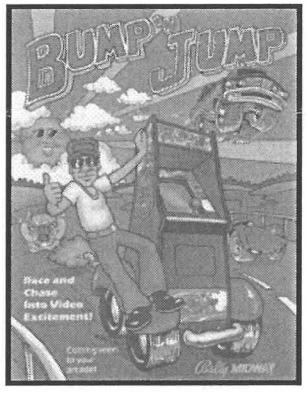
## Up next: Russ

Joe, you mention wishing Tempest would get a modermizing... Do you not think games like **N2O** and possibly even **Rez** aren't kind of already doing that?

Of course, I wouldn't mind seeing a new swing on my arcade favorite, **Jump N Jump**. You could do more things with the jumping aspect I suppose, adding extra paths in the 3D realm.

It's funny though... When they "upgraded" **Robotron** to **Smash TV** it was still good, but I'm not sure they could do much better than that. It certainly wouldn't translate into 3D/FPS [They tried 3D with **Robotron X** and it didn't really fly – see our review in DP#43 or in our online archive – Ed.] – part of the feel of the game is being totally surrounded, and that doesn't work as well in FPS without slowing down the enemy onslaught or making the game impossible to win I think.

As far as updating hardware too... How about taking the **Journey** concept to the next level? I don't mean the gameplay, but the idea of taking a band and building a game around it. Having levels like "Death Metal Drummer" with the full double pedal rig would sure help kids get their cardio-vascular exercise, though the "Slayer's 'Reign In Blood'" rhythm game with guitar controller might raise the incidence of early repetitive stress injuries.



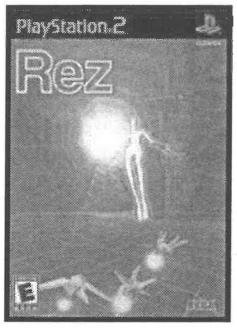

**3D Bump-N-Jump? We can only hope it would look exactly like this flyer...**

Hmm, I wonder what the next gimmicky controller would be anyway. We already have keyboards, steering wheels, guns, fishing poles, musical instruments, fingerboard, vertical tank controls, and if you count Japan, conducting batons and train controls (and if Korea, the **Boonga Boonga** hand/finger). What next? A sled rig for your virtual sled dogs?

## Up next: Ian

The best music isn't (always) made by the best technology, why would the best video games (always) be made by the best technology?

That having been said, online is clearly the way to go with console and computer emulation. They simply have to create a virtual online arcade with some creative solutions to two player.




**Did REZ pick up where Tempest left off?**

For example - two player simulatneous Tempest - classic Tempest online - or even traditional alternating games. How about high score races? Two minutes to play, unlimited lives, see who can get the highest score!

The high score thing is a start (as with Xbox live), but wouldn't it rock to start a virtual DP arcade where not only could people chat (voice or keyboard?) but challenge each other to classic games and sit their virtual asses down at virtual consoles? THAT would be a classic gaming community.

## Up next: Monique

"The best music isn't (always) made by the best technology, why would the best video games (always) be made by the best technology?"

I nominate that for quote of the year, without a second's hesitation! What a great point. To this day, my fondest video game memories center around **Star Raiders** - which I finally found via emulation - but it's not quite "right" this way, so I'm going to have to find an old copy for my nostalgia attacks.

As for gimmicky controllers - we have a golf club for the Sega Genesis (I think that's the one!) - and the other day my son was thinking of some others. How about a giant hamster ball you get in, for Super Monkey Ball? Think of the possibilities - play a game and work out at the same time. Oh wait, we already have **DDR** for that, don't we. And now I can add on the new PS2 **Eye-Toy** -

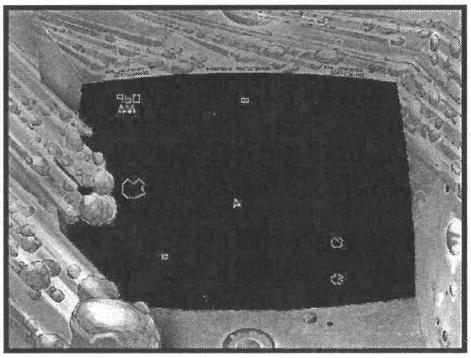
anyone ever try that? Who needs free weights to build up those arms and shoulders, when you can "window wash" on Eye-Toy, or knock the silly little ninjas to the ground with your elbows!

## Up next: Dave

"The best music isn't (always) made by the best technology, why would the best video games (always) be made by the best technology?"

Righty-O! It's the same for any kind of art - video games, music, painting, what have you. Art doesn't get "better" over time. It gets "different."

During the Renaissance, everyone was pushing for "realism" in their



**Asteroids. Simply beautiful.**

artwork, with some artists going as far as to dissect corpses to make sure they had a proper understanding of the underlying structure of the figure. The push toward realistic figure rendering continued, and painted figures went from flattened characters to quasi-photorealistic and eventually photo-realistic over time. Eventually the first cameras popped up.

So why didn't painting die off?

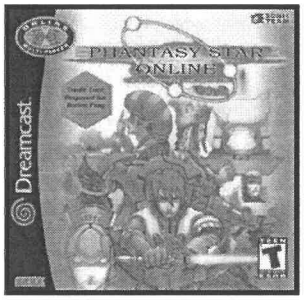
'Cause like Ian said - the best [art] isn't (always) made by the best technology.

The beauty of photo-realistic games on the current gen consoles certainly doesn't diminish the beauty of well done older games - **Asteroids, Tapper, Blaster, Punch Out!!**... some absolutely beautiful artwork there. (Music too! ) It feels like we're finally getting a bit of that thought in some of the modern games, with the best recent example possibly being WarioWare Inc. A bunch of those mini-games are nothing more than contenders for the old BW Game and Watch games, but they still look incredible.

Lemme borrow from Ian a little bit more: "For example- two player simulatneous Tempest- classic tempest online- or even traditional alternating games. How about high score races? Two minutes to play, unlimited lives, see who can get the highest score!"

That would be way cool - sort of an online "Starcade" deal. We could even throw in the trivia questions! Bring back the high score! Plus we could face off on Crazy Climber on a much more regular basis. That might even make a good candidate for a "redux" version where two players could climb up the same building... and try to shove each other off along the way. "I've got a flower pot for ya, pal!"

SO. What of the virtual arcade? How will it work? It's definitely feasible in these modern times - or is it already going on and I've missed it?




**PSO: the online addiction. The same draw as crack and EverQuest, but much safer.**

## Up next: Ian

My other good quote (I thought), which requires a bit more thought is:

Video games - enjoy them while you still can't.

That is, video games (interactive entertainment) will become so prominent on earth, that you practically won't be able to avoid them everywhere you go. Like TV - in every corner of our world. Interactive entertainment will be so immersive that people will live their daily lives FOR their interactive ones. **Everquest** (and it's crack-like draw) is just the beginning.

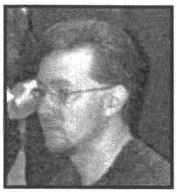
## Up next: Monique

You're so right! Think about it....on a recent stay at a hotel in a casino, there were Nintendo controllers hooked to the TV. If I wanted, I could "order" games by the hour, the "porn" of the video game addict. Airplanes offer them, cell phones offer them, heck, I even have a GB emulator on my cell phone with several ROMS to choose from (of course, I'm stuck in Zelda, and often draw concerned looks on the subway as I yell at Link to do what I want him to do...). What's next - will they replace the fun screensavers on the computers at my pediatrician's office?

Wait. That's a good idea. The kids would LOOK FORWARD to going to the doctor's office.

As for the virtual arcade idea, I love it - we have seen examples of it through the various online offerings - just look at my favorite and much missed **Phantasy Star Online**! And people are not waiting for the developers to come to them with online access, they're developing their own ways to play together while far apart. It adds HUGE value to a game when you're not limited to those in your household for playing partners. How would it work? Umm...smoke and mirrors? Actually I think that until the "Big Three" agree on something, there will always be people left out in the cold, so it will require a third party to be "console blind"...wouldn't you think?

## Up next: Larry



Interesting spin on Monique's thoughts: how many times have so-called "console-blind" companies tried to introduce ways to connect consoles? Here are a few I think of off the top of my head:

- X-Band
- Saturn Netlink
- Jaguar Voice Modem

And then you have the open source efforts underway to network consoles and games (the one for the Gamecube comes to mind)... so much creative programming talent out there!

So on the topic of the "virtual arcade", you have some games (the classic compilations come to mind) that drop you a simulated arcade environment to help replicate the

look and feel... When you think about a classic arcade, what decor/color schemes/atmosphere make or break a place?

## Up next: Joe

I think all a classic arcade would need are classic arcade machines. If someone were to visit such a place, that would be the draw regardless of the atmosphere. If you think about the arcades of an era gone by one of the things that would be different today is the non-smoking laws. Never again would you have to move a tiny ashtray from the cab console or flick a butt off of the player-2 start button!

Someone else may have better "design plans", so I open the floor to the next person in line, but I'd also like to add: "If you were to construct a classic arcade, what coin-ops would you consider 'must haves'?"

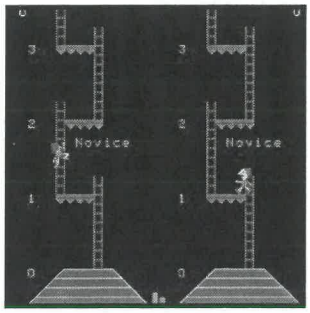
## Up next: Dave

Design plans: there are certain "must have" items here.

1) Black lights. Gotta have those black lights on so that the other-worldly-white Nike hi-tops and white t-shirts glow in all their glory.

2) Neon accent lighting. It's just cool. And it should be set up like the old Atari coin-op artwork with the different colored outlines around everything (e.g., **Space Duel**, **Missile Command**, **Black Widow**, etc.)

3) Different "areas." Not game themed areas, just different portions of the arcade to visit - not quite rooms necessarily, maybe a raised area five steps above the rest of the room; maybe a long corridor of games off in its own wing - that kind of thing.




**Yup, Fax. It's WAY underrated, baby. 80s trivia? Woo hoo!**

4) Snack bar. Mmmm... arcade food!

Must have games? Wow, there sure are a lot of 'em:

**D'oh! Dave forgets BattleZone, gets drop-kicked by Russ. And deservedly so.**

**Below: Tapper and Super Pac-Man.**

Robotron:2084
Pac-Man
Asteroids
Space Invaders
Tempest
Major Havoc
Defender
Stargate
Sinistar
Tapper
Millipede
Centipede
Crystal Castles
Missile Command
Star Wars
Super Pac-Man
Xevious
Mappy
Mario Bros.
Elevator Action
Joust
Jungle King
Fax
Dragon's Lair
Punch Out!!
Timber
Food Fight
Satan's Hollow
Turbo
Mr. Do!
Dig Dug
Kangaroo
Pole Position
Super Monaco GP
Slither
Pepper II
Mr. Do!s Castle
Donkey Kong
Donkey Kong Jr.
Donkey Kong 3

...and lots more. What else do we need? I know I'm forgetting a bunch, and some of the design elements - who wants to add to the lists?

## Up next: Russ

I can't believe you left out **Battlezone**! I would also go retro with my retro and suggest having one of the Atari/Kee race games like **Indy/Sprint**. Black & white, but some of the smoothest controls ever.

As to other elements, I'd suggest having at least one pin (**Black Knight** might be the ultimate for setting the period, but I'm thinking about an old **Spanish Eyes** machine that I loved as a youth -- and may be misremembering thename!), or something else non-video, like a bowling machine or a Chexx hockey machine. Foosball is NOT the right thing here.

And I suppose, a jukebox full of early 80s tunes would be about right too...

## Up next: Monique

And what about the flooring? "A house can be boring without the right FLOORING!"

OK, so excuse me for ripping off a local carpet store's slogan, but you know what I mean....the carpet!

Red....with some painful-to-the-eye pattern on it, black and purple lines, swirling about, or polka dots...in some places worn thin from all the feet that abuse it...stains and burns here and there from spilled drinks in the heat of the battle, or cigarette butts that drop to the floor unnoticed...

No wait, we'll make our arcade non-smoking, right?

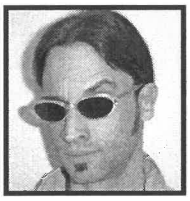
## Up next: Ian

The gamestream has turned down a tributary. Flooring is tough to follow, Monique.

So what ever happened to the modern take on the arcade? Are there any Gameworks still open? Does anyone go to Dave and Buster's (I've never visited)? I'm talking about the mega-entertainment complex/arcade.

I was excited about the Gameworks model- beer, food, arcade games. Most had an assortment of classic stand-ups. And I didn't mind the game card model, although nothing beats a pocketful of tokens. Of course, I only made it twice, since they were too big budget to be convenient, mostly in major urban centers.

## Up next: Dave



Ah-HAH! Now you've got me thinking... The proliferation of those "rechargeable card" thingies in all the gamerooms sort of signaled the end of the arcade era for me. I mean, with a sack full of tokens, you're a force to be reckoned with. Not just on a game of **Joust** or **Two Tigers** though. I mean, like -- you ever see a couple of guys get into a really heated game of **Atari Football**? (Y'know, the B/W trakball one?) We had this sleazy game room near us that handed out forty tokens for a fiver, and guys were good for an entire evening with just five or ten bucks. But the thing about carrying around that many tokens is that that an argument over a game could have ended up with a sack full of tokens to the ol' noggin.

You ever see some guy get hit up side the head with a plastic card full of credits? He doesn't even blink. At best, he might get a paper cut, and while they might sting like a mutha, it just doesn't have the same "oomph" to it, you know?

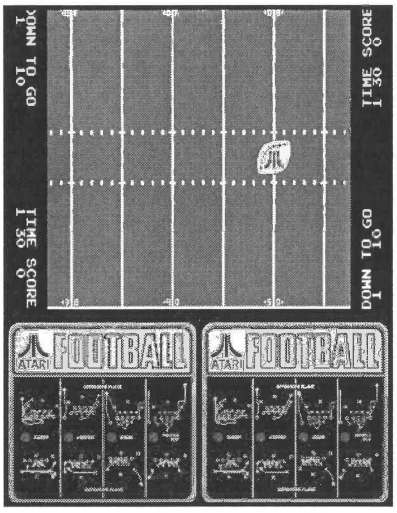
Ever see anything weird like that at YOUR local game room? Or what about your favorite game room? Why was it your favorite? Was it because it was a dump, or maybe the opposite - because it was a palace? Did you ever save up your allowance and practice on your favorite games at home so you could go to the arcade and "bring pain" to the gameroom patrons?

## Up next: Russ

Hmm, I never really saw any fights in the arcades, though I remember being a little disturbed by the image of one of the "bad kids" at school doing really well at a light gun game (**Vs. Gumshoe**??)...

I grew up in a small town (Omro WI), and most of the time, there WAS no arcade... That meant a drive into the next town (Oshkosh) to the mall to visit Aladdin's Castle. The place was magical -- just the din, the lights, and it was reasonably well-kept, which I appreciated (no smoking either).

Eventually, even our town got an arcade. It was on the main street, so it had that older building vibe and wasn't as "fancy" as Aladdin's Castle, but it was awesome having something local for a change. Sadly, it closed after only a year or so. I did manage one visit to another local town, Berlin, while they had an arcade, and that was pretty cool too -- a lot of games that you wouldn't see at Aladdin's Castle. But I have no idea how long that lasted, as we didn't go there much.



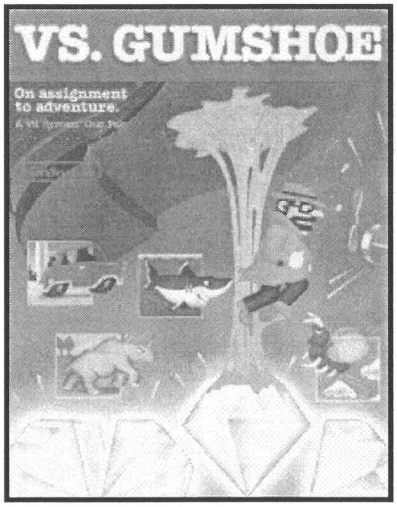

**Atari Football may have directly led to incidents of token filled socks to the head. Parents were outraged. Arcade patrons were scared, yet amused.**

Now, as to arcade currency, I always preferred quarters myself -- seemed more straightforward and honest -- but tokens were okay because they would sometimes give you deals if you bought more all at once, plus they'd occasionally award free tokens for a good report card, which I was in a position to take advantage of.

But the cards... They're remarkable from the business side because it makes the cost of games more invisible, meaning you probably won't hesitate to run your card through the slot of that big showcase game, whereas if you had to actually pony up six, eight or ten tokens, you'd think twice about it. And yeah, the cards take some of the magic out of the whole experience, but I think they were inevitable as far as the business side goes (it's cheaper than having tokens made).

And getting back to Ian's question, yeah, there's a Gameworks about fifteen minutes away from me, in Schaumburg IL. I've only been there once, and that was a work getaway. I've also been to the nearest Dave & Buster's exactly once, and they were similar experiences. They end up being costly if you mean to eat & drink & stay awhile, or play the showcase games, which is how I tend to view them, but you wouldn't have to do that of course.

I have to admit that these giant complexes also seem far removed from the joy of the old arcades I relied on, but again, seem to be the natural progression of things. In other words, I think, sadly, I've outgrown the arcade experience rather than growing with it. Still haven't outgrown the games though... I had a hoot in both of them.




**No-goodniks play many games of Vs. Gumshoe, terrify arcade patrons with their mad skillz.**

What about the rest of you? Is gaming at home merely a matter of practicality, or is it because arcades just aren't what they used to be to you? I'd love to hear about the difference between giant arcades then versus Gameworks etc -- do they feel the same to you, or still different?

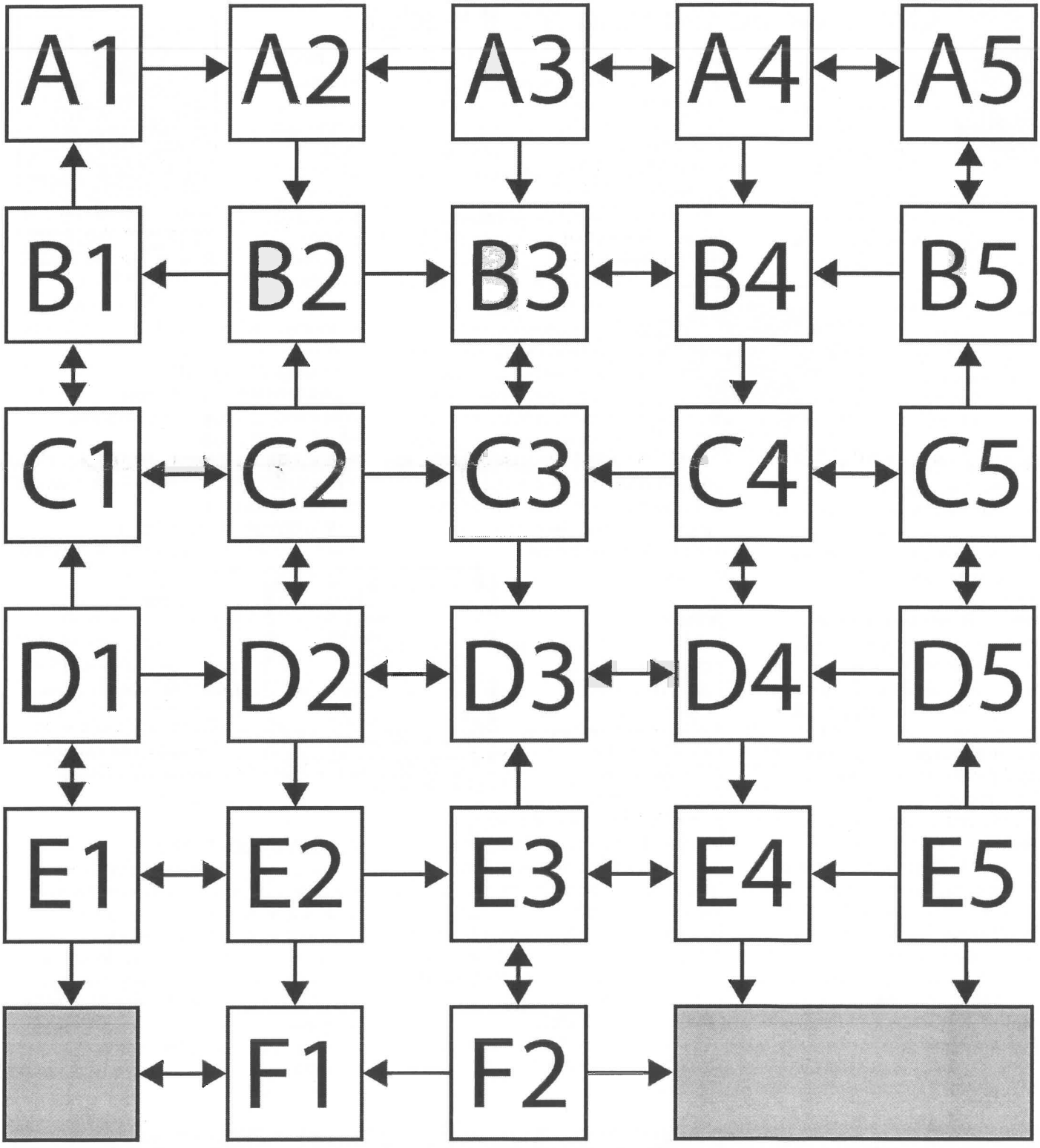
## THE END?

Nope! Well, okay, it IS the end of this particular gamestream on these pages, but... what do YOU think?

If you'd like to contribute to a gamestream of your very own, just dial up www.digitpress.com on your browser and open up the floodgates by posting a topic of your very own. We'll meet you there! ☒

We love contests. After all, we're all about GAMES! If you think you're up to this issue's challenge, keep readin'!

Remember all those familiar (and perhaps not so familiar) faces on the front cover of this issue? Think you know who ALL of 'em are? We wanna know just how good you are at identifying some of our pals. The reader who submits the most correct answers will win a big box of gaming goodies including a dozen or more boxed intellivision carts and other assorted games from the offices of DPHQ. In the event of a tie, the highest scoring readers will be placed in the DP lottery drum and a winner will be chosen at random. Use this grid as a guide to fill in the names of the DP56 Cover Crew and email your answers to us at digitalpress@email.com. Remember to put "DP56 gamestream contest" in the subject line and email your answers to us BEFORE the contest deadline: April 15th at 12AM! Good luck, gang. And game ON!



# the Wacky World of... AL

by Al Backiel

## Other Video Gaming Merit Badges

By now, most of you are aware of the "merit badges" that were once available from Activision. They resemble the embroidered patches that are awarded to Boy Scouts. A scout could earn a merit badge for anything from first-aid to stamp collecting by meeting certain criteria. Activision awarded a different merit badge for almost every game they made. You had to provide a photo of the TV screen displaying a qualifying score. In return you got a nice patch and a congratulatory letter. This was a terrific promo. It was as if you were being rewarded for your video game skills. Today, they are sought out as collector's items.

**Did YOU command the respect of Activision and earn this Space Shuttle patch?**

This article will not be discussing the Activision merit badges in detail. Joseph Huber has posted a complete list in his Activision Patches FAQ on the DP web site: www.digitpress.com. Pictures can be found on other web sites or in the game manuals themselves. I would, however, like to make a few comments. The question of rarity should be taken into consideration. It was relatively easy to get a merit badge in say... **Laser Blast** or **Spider Fighter** and damn near impossible to get the highest level in **Dolphin** or **Space Shuttle**. That would have to make the latter badges extremely rare. I managed to get some of the badges that I was missing from a user friend who knew somebody at Activision. I'd also like to reveal that Activision would sometimes substitute the 5200 version of a patch if they ran out of the 2600 or vice versa. I have seen this occur with **River Raid** and I think **Pitfall!** in the later stages. That way the player was not disappointed. Some games had no awards. Some had as many as four different levels of awards.

There are several lesser-known merit badges from other companies that are also out there. I came across most of them after the fact. Either I missed the opportunity completely or more likely the promo was over before I decided to spring for the game. A few were awarded as part of the initial release of a game. The starting price of a new game is always high and being the cheapo that I am, I usually wait for the price to drop. Here then are the ones that I have come across.

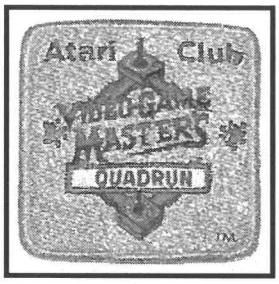
### ATARI

Atari had a few game patches, probably taking a cue from Activision. I didn't count the Atarian Club patch because that was not a game award. The first three below were part of an Atari Game Club promo. The **Swordquest** Contest certificates are personalized and mention the skill level and the game involved. You can see a scan of Russ Perry's copy on Scott Stilphen's Swordquest pages on the *2600 Connection* web site: http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Lair/9260/sword.html.

**BATTLEZONE - Patch.** "Atari Club Video Game Masters/ BattleZone." Awarded for scoring 75,000 points.

**GRAVITAR - Patch.** "Atari Club Video Game Masters/ Gravitar." Awarded for scoring 15,000 points.

**QUADRUN - Patch.** "Atari Club Video Game Masters/ Quadrun." Awarded for scoring 25,000 points.




**The coveted Atari Quadrun patch was the second of three in the Video Game Masters series.**

**SWORDQUEST SERIES:**

**EARTHWORLD - Certificate.** Awarded for finding one or more words of the solution.

**FIREWORLD - Certificate.** Awarded for finding one or more words of the solution.

**WATERWORLD - Certificate.** Awarded for finding one or more words of the solution.

**The infamous Swordquest certificate, courtesy of our very own Russ Perry Jr.!**

It appears that the Grand Finalists in the Swordquest Challenges did not get to keep their special tiebreaker carts. The winner got a jeweled artifact worth $25,000. The **Waterworld** contest reportedly was never completed.

### CBS VIDEO GAMES

These really are merit badges. Each is made of some type of metal with yellow lettering and resembles a military decoration. Good idea! "For uncommon valor shown while under enemy fire and outstanding service above and beyond the call of duty," I suppose.

**BLUEPRINT - Set of Six Decals.** Awarded for naming the mystery word. Does it exist?

**GORF - Medal.**
"Gorf /Space Cadet/CBS Video Games" for scoring ___ points. Space Cadet was only ONE of the SIX ranks. I doubt if they made a different medal for each rank.

**The coveted Space Cadet medal from the CBS version of GORF. Nifty.**

**SOLAR FOX - Set of Six Decals.**
Awarded for naming the mystery word. Does it exist?

**WIZARD OF WOR - Badge.**
"Wizard of Wor/Worrior/ CBS Video Games" Awarded for scoring ___ points.

I never got the decals for Blueprint/Solar Fox, because I was too late. They were pictured with a return post card inside the box. I mailed in both answers and eventually got a "Solar Fox Rocks" t-shirt, so it wasn't a total loss. Maybe there was a problem with the printing of the decals? Even if they were printed, it doesn't look like there was any mention of what the award was for.

## DATA AGE

The following information comes from a full page ad that appeared in various video games magazines of that era. Since this ad appeared late in the life of the company, this should be taken into consideration. Personally, I don't think they bothered because of their financial troubles.

**BERMUDA TRIANGLE - Unknown**
A **Secret Manuscript** was offered for scoring 100,000 points.
A **Replica Artifact from the Underwater City** was offered for scoring 500,000 points.

## IMAGIC

All badges (except for **Moonsweeper** and **Solar Storm**) were "Super Star" stickers made of gold foil and printed with black ink on a die-cut star-shaped label. This promo was in their user mag, *The Imagic Numb Thumb Club News*. They remind me of those brownie points that teachers used to give out for papers that were graded A+, only these stars are a heck of a lot bigger. Most of the ones I have seen have been mounted on black construction paper and then cut out to make them stand out better. This was not always done neatly. At first glance I thought they were homemade, but after further research, I found out they were legit. The font is the same as the one that Imagic used on their games and boxes. Rarity would be dependent upon how difficult the qualifying score was to achieve. There was a metal pin-back button for Moonsweeper and a t-shirt for Solar Storm.

**Gamers who swept many moons were awarded this "Mission Accomplished" button for their efforts.**

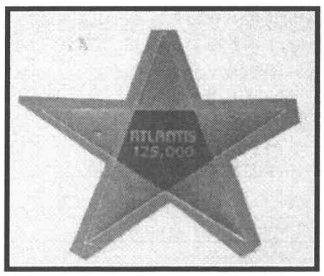
**ATLANTIS** "Atlantis / 125,000"
**COSMIC ARK** "Cosmic Ark / 30,000"
**DEMON ATTACK** "Demon Attack / 100,000"
**FIRE FIGHTER** "Fire Fighter / (2:38)"
**RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX** "Riddle of the Sphinx / 12,000"
**STAR VOYAGER** "Star Voyager / 35"
**TRICK SHOT** "Trick Shot / 37" The 37 points was for a run of all the racks.
**MOONSWEEPER - Button.**
"USS Moonsweeper / Mission Accomplished" button awarded for scoring ___ points.
**SOLAR STORM - T-shirt**
"Solar Storm Survivor" awarded for scoring 5,000 points.

Later on, Imagic supposedly awarded circular iron-on decals that bore a picture and title of the game involved. It doesn't look like they mentioned anything else. This promo was followed soon after by the "Crash of '84." Therefore, I have not been able to verify their existence. Additional bonuses were planned for multiple games: an Imagic Expert t-shirt (three games) and an Imagic jacket (six games). Here is a list of those games and qualifying scores:

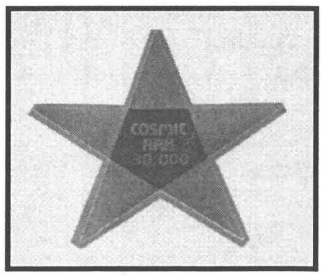
**DECALS FOR VARIOUS GAMES:**
2600 **Atlantis:**125,000
INTV **Atlantis**: 50,000
**Cosmic Ark**: 30,000
**Beauty & the Beast**: 8 buildings, 25,000
2600 **Demon Attack**: 100,000
INTV **Demon Attack**: 20,000
**Dragonfire**: 25,000
**Dracula**: 15,000
**Fire Fighter**: 2:38
2600 **Dragonfire**: 25,000
**No Escape!**:10,000
**Ice Trek**: 25,000
**Riddle of the Sphinx**:12,000
**Microsurgeon**: $300,000,00 bill
**Star Voyager**: 35
**Nova Blast**: 45,000
**Trick Shot**: 37
**Safecracker**: 25,000
**Swords & Serpents**: 1,600
**Tropical Trouble**: 9 islands
**Truckin'** (Game 1): by 9AM, June 2 (Game 2): 10 days / $9000
**White Water:** 10,000

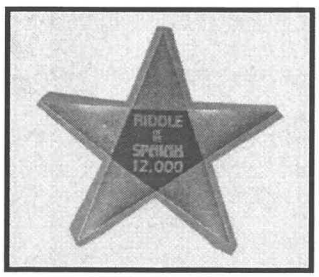
The finalists in the Defend Atlantis Contest received a special tiebreaker cart. For more info and scans see the Atari Age web site. Grand prize was $10,000 and a Bermuda vacation. Other prizes consisted of $1,000 in

**Imagic tantalized gamers with these giant foil star merit badges like this one for Trick Shot.**



**... and this one for Atlantis.**


**...and this one for Cosmic Ark.**



**...and this one for Riddle of the Sphinx.**

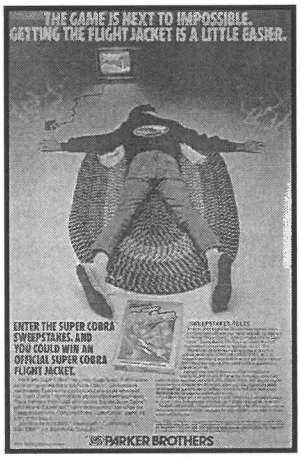
cash, snorkeling gear and t-shirts. Whether Imagic gave out any awards for Coleco, Vic-20, Odyssey2 or other systems or even if they finished the 2600 contest, I have no idea.

**ATLANTIS - T-Shirt and Letter.**

**ATLANTIS II - Cartridge and Letter.** Awarded for scoring over 900,000 points in Atlantis.

## PARKER BROTHERS

**G.I. JOE: COBRA STRIKE** (2600). An initial program offering from Parker Bros. You had to roll the game by reaching the last level and then destroying the Black Cobra. The final screen displayed the programmer's initials. Only eleven of these black baseball caps with a black Cobra logo were actually awarded and the winner's names were published in Electronic Games in September 1983. Whether it was an embroidered sew-on patch or not, I don't know. (baseball cap)


THE GAME IS NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE.
GETTING THE FLIGHT JACKET IS A LITTLE EASIER.
ENTER THE SUPER COBRA SWEEPSTAKES, AND YOU COULD WIN AN OFFICIAL SUPER COBRA FLIGHT JACKET.
PARKER BROTHERS

**The guy in this old comic book advertisement is wearing the coveted Super Cobra jacket. Note the caption: in reality, it was the other way around.**

Parker Brothers may have given out a few more awards, but they were sweepstakes prizes, which rely on pure luck rather than skill. Another baseball cap was the fourth prize in a **Star Wars: Death Star Battle** trivia contest. Third prize was an **Ewok Adventure** cart, but that prize was never awarded beacuse the Ewok game never got past the prototype stage. Also questionable are the 2,000 "I fought the Pharaoh " t-shirts for **Tutankham** (2600/INTV) and the one-hundred personalized flight jackets for **Super Cobra** (INTV/CV/5200/Atari computers).

## SEGA

**TAC-SCAN - Patch.** Qualifying scores were: 200,000 - 299,999 (Awesome); 300,000+ (Sega-Mundo).

I managed 244,900, but sent my score in too late I guess. I never received the patch.

**Reaching one of two high scores on Mission Survive awarded the super-gamer a pair of stickers.**

## VIDEO GEMS

You were really on the honor system here. Four stickers (with two different ranks) were packaged with each PAL game. They are referred to in the documentation as badges, but were actually stickers. **Steeplechase and Treasure Down Below** did not specify the actual qualifying scores. There are rating systems in the manuals that could be used as a guide. Thanks go out to Marco Kerstens for his input.

**MISSILE CONTROL - Stickers.** "10000 Points Qualified"; "20000 Points Qualified"

**MISSION SURVIVE - Stickers.** "5000 Points Qualified"; "10000 Points Qualified"

**STEEPLECHASE - Stickers.** "Grand Master"; "Super Champion"

**SURFER'S PARADISE - Stickers.** "3000 Points Qualified"; "5000 Points Qualified"

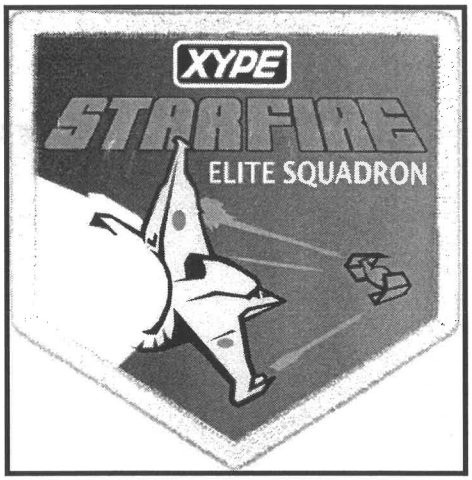
**TREASURE DOWN BELOW - Stickers.** "Expert"; "Super Expert"

## XYPE

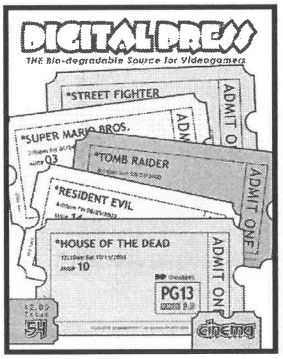
Xype revived the concept of awarding merit badges with a recent homebrew release that is available from AtariAge.com. Winners' names and screenshots are posted on their website. Limited to fifty awards.

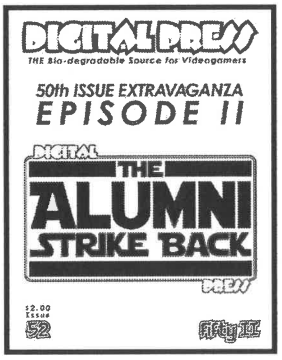
**STAR FIRE - Patch.** "Xype Star Fire Elite Squadron " awarded for scoring 3,500+ points.

If anybody has any further additions or corrections to this list, I can be reached at albackiel@aol.com. I am basically interested in documenting all the awards, other than the Activision patches, that were given out for classic game systems. ☒




**Xype's Starfire: Elite Squadrun patch. Only fifty were awarded.**

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Don't despair! We still have a limited number of the recent issues pictured here. If you missed one or need a second copy to replace the one that your co-workers, neighbors or satellite TV repairman swiped, drop us a line and we'll get one out to you for the paltry sum of $2. Game ON, gang.

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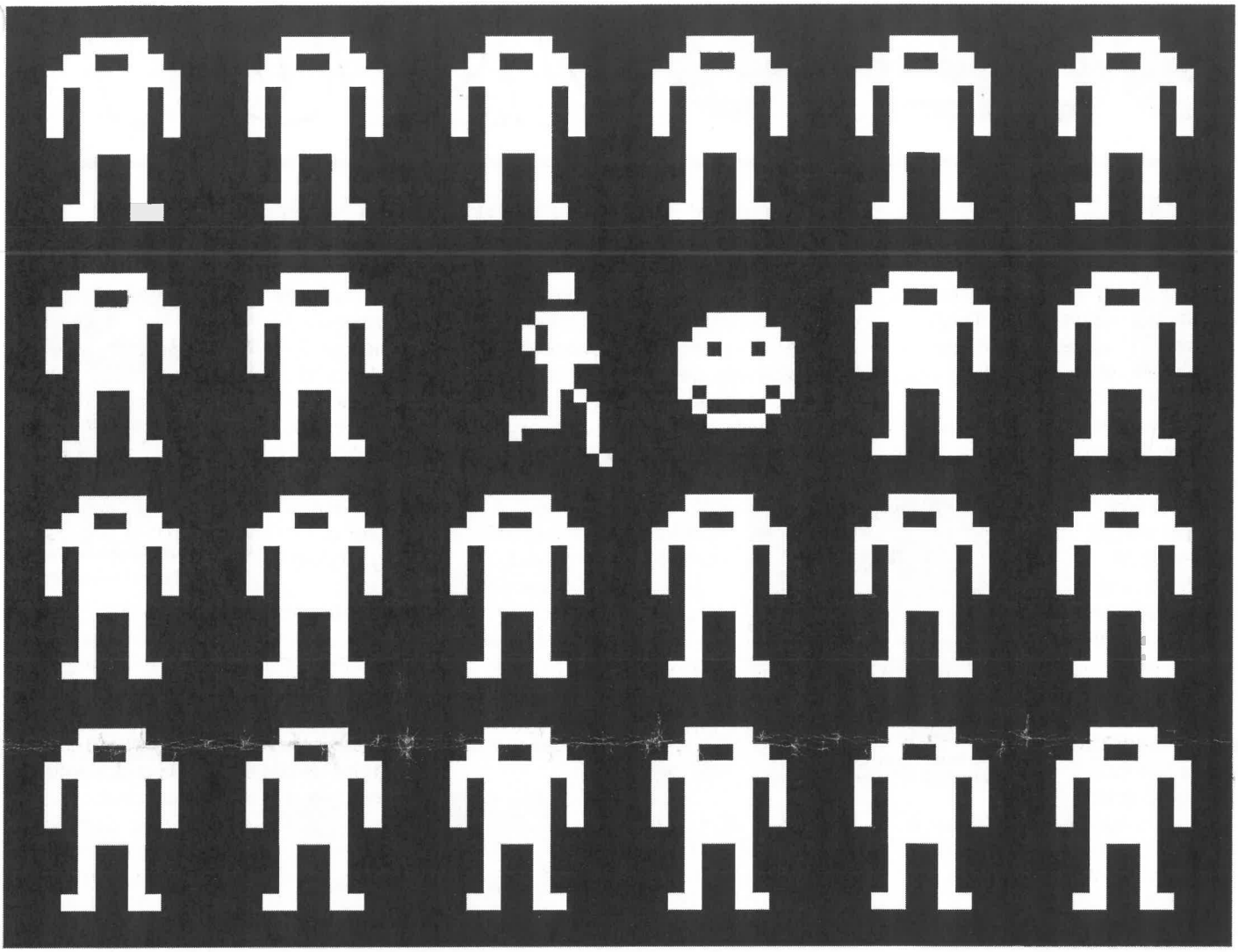

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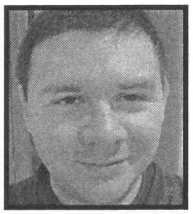
# Tony Bueno's BUENOVISION

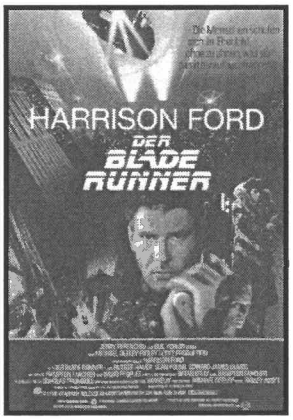


## A Personal Waterloo: Accepting My Limitations

**Join Tony as he blurbs about the trials and tribulations of life... and of Street Fighter III.3**

I always made it a point to finish what I start. Even if it's something I don't necessarily enjoy. Back when I was in school, I never cared for mathematics, but I distinctly remember being in class, the bell would ring, and I'd still be sitting at my desk, trying to complete a particular algebra equation. Fortunately, I've never been someone who was obsessed with getting straight A's in school. I just never felt that a challenge like this would make a significant difference in my life. And I was proven correct, as unfortunate family and personal economic crises never did allow me to earn a degree. Even so, after paying off my student loans and moving to California from the most wretched state in the Union, in retrospect, it was the right decision. Eleven years of my life were spent in that hellhole, and if I hadn't gotten out at the first chance I had, I honestly don't know if I'd ever have escaped and moved to the only place I've always wanted to live.

**Borf to Tony: "You cannot win!" Tony to Borf: "The hell you say!"**

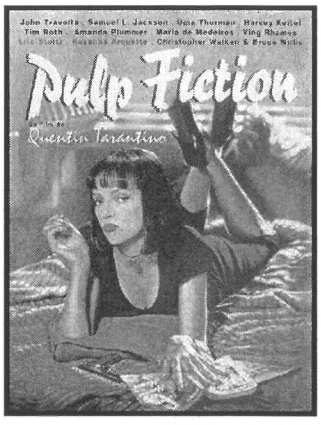



**Nifty Blade Runner movie poster from Germany.**

The past ten years of have been without a doubt the most turbulent in my life thus far. I've gone from graduating high school to a brief stint in college, spent time incarcerated, had two near death experiences, and spent some time hospitalized because of a nervous breakdown in 1997. As late as 1999, I was working minimum wage labor jobs and enduring the humiliation of living with my mother as an adult. A payoff from a lawsuit was my only salvation, and it allowed me to buy a new car, pay off my debts, and finally leave a place which can only be described as a prison without walls.

So, looking back on it all, I'd say I've accomplished almost everything I set out to achieve in life. I always wanted to leave (to be considerate of my readers, I will delete the state's name). Done. I always wanted a nice pad and car. Acquired. As a child visiting Disneyland, I asked my parents for one of the animation cels, and was denied. I made it clear to them that when I had my own place, I would have animation cels and movie posters adorning my walls. Looking around at home, I see images of *Scarface*, *The Lion King*, *Blade Runner*, *Darkwing Duck*, *Animaniacs*, *Raging Bull*, *Daffy Duck*, *Pulp Fiction*, *Space Ace*, *Dragon's Lair*, *The Road Warrior*, and *Eraserhead*, all around. When asked what my ideal profession would be, I said I would like to be a video game journalist. Now, while I don't do that for a living, I have written a few professional articles and I am proud to be a staff writer for Digital Press (I suppose I'm too lazy and/or uninspired to be a senior writer, but whatever). So through luck, persistence, courage, and tenacity I have escaped a pathetic existence and succeeded despite overwhelming odds. And although the journey has not been without its sacrifices and has not always been smooth sailing even where I am now, what price can be placed on living exactly how and where one wants, on one's own terms?

**GAH! A David Lynch flick!**

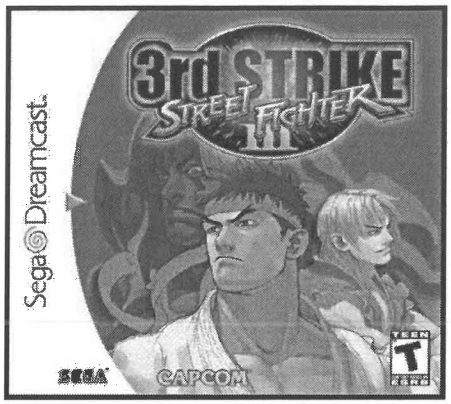



**A sewer rat may taste like pumpkin pie, but I'd never know, 'cause...**

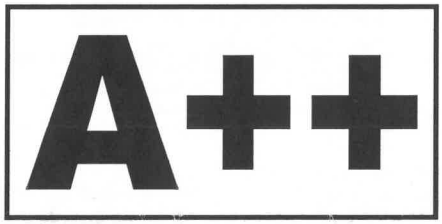
Things like this tend to make one cocky or arrogant about one's abilities. Very few things (more than I can conceive, actually) can really bring me lower or higher than I've already been, so my experiences have made me somewhat jaded. Things like video games, chess and writing allow me to safely challenge myself. After all, let's face it, is life really worth living without a challenge?

Now that this mini autobiography, personal rant, or soliloquy or whatever you want to call it is through, back to the subject at hand.

There is only one area in my life where perfection is more like a standard than a goal, and that is the **Street Fighter** series. On every home version I've owned and every coin op on which I was able, my standard of perfection was simple enough. Never was I satisfied until I was able to complete the entire game on the hardest setting without continuing or even losing a round. If a secret character was present, it goes without saying that they must be defeated as well. But **Street Fighter III, 3rd Strike** has placed an irrepressible shadow over my life, because that particular title gives players a grading system at the end of every match and game, with A++ being the highest possible grade. Thus far, I have not been able to achieve this grade for the overall game (although I have gotten A++ on an individual match, but that really isn't relevant).



**The bane of Tony's existence: Street Fighter III 3rd Strike.**



**Tony dreams the impossible dream. Or IS it possible? The world may never know.**

I don't know what in God's name it takes to achieve this. I've beaten every single character, no continuing, not lost a round, beaten the secret character, and only gotten an A. I've done far worse, i.e. lost a match (oh no!), not gotten the secret character, and gotten A+. I'm at a loss, but I must only assume there is some criteria I'm not meeting. Nowhere (and I mean NOWHERE) have I ever seen in writing what exactly it takes to get A++ as an overall grade. Street Fighter III 3rd Strike's brilliance as the greatest fighting title of all time has tragically never been appreciated or understood. To my knowledge, no guides have been published. The FAQs don't answer the question. All twelve lucky people who actually own the Dreamcast and SF3.3 have never met to discuss the issue, although don't think I never mentioned it. So what in the goddamned cocksucking piss hell does it fucking take, people???

**Alex, can you perfectly parry punk-thrown basketballs for A++? It's possible...**

There is only one thing I can figure, and I'm about 90% sure this will do it. The second bonus stage, where that punk ass wannabe Sean throws basketballs which must be parried -- I think that must be completed perfectly, which, for me, is pretty much impossible. I say pretty much because I do recall that on one occasion I actually did successfully parry twenty out of twenty, but that was one of the times where I lost to an opponent, so the game had to be reset (continuing is for wusses, don't you know...). So, I'm pretty much certain, therefore, that this is the only thing standing in my way. But since it is SOOOOO very difficult just to complete the game on the hardest setting, get the secret character, and never lose one bloody round in the process, I'm not sure I could ever accomplish this lofty goal.

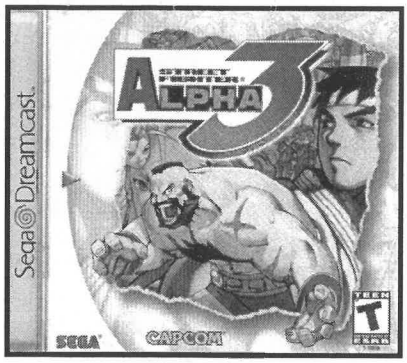
So, to paraphrase the classic Tootsie Roll commercial, "What does it take to get A++ in Street Fighter III, 3rd Strike? The world may never know."

I'm at a loss for words on how to end this particular column, so I will end it with a verse from the poem *Compensation*, by Theodosia Garrison.

"Because I craved a gift too great
For any prayer of mine to bring
Today with empty hands I go
Yet must my heart rejoice to know
I did not ask a lesser thing" ☒

## Other Street Fighter games for the Dreamcast

**Street Fighter III Double Impact.**



**Street Fighter Alpha 3.**

**Marvel vs. Capcom 2.**

# DP INTERVIEWS:

## Odyssey² Programmer, Robert Cheezem!

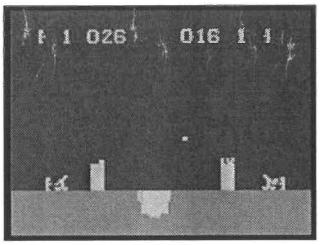
### by Dave Giarrusso

**Way back in August 2000, we had a chance to sit and gab with Odyssey2 game programmer, the delightful Robert Cheezem. This interview, long thought lost to the "Horrible Hard Drive Incident of 2000," was recently unearthed in primitive paper form, several levels below the substrata of papers on the desk of DPHQ.**

**Recovered and immediately archived for posterity, we now present this DP Exclusive interview to you, our beloved readers. A big "thank you" goes out to Robert for taking time out of his busy schedule to chat with us. Thanks again, Robert!**

**DP:** *What are you up to these days? Still in the videogaming computer field?*

**RC:** Well, about ten years ago I started my own computer consulting company. I am president of Quantum Solutions Inc. and we develop custom software solutions for companies.




**Blast your opponent's castle to SMITHEREENS! Turkey!**

**DP:** *Our current understanding is that you designed both* **Smithereens** *and* **Type and Tell** *for the 02. Is our information correct? Did you design any other games for the 02, released or otherwise?*

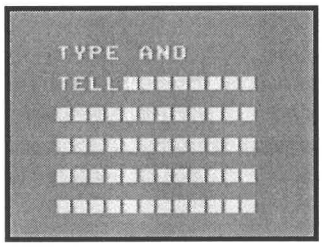
**RC:** Yes, your info is correct. By the time Type and Talk came out I was ready to leave, so I wasn't involved in any other games.

**DP:** *Have you designed games for any other system(s)?*

**RC:** No. It just wasn't fun any more and if you can't enjoy what you are doing, maybe you shouldn't be doing it. (A personal point of view.)

**DP:** *Were games "assigned" to you (i.e., Brass said, 'we need a math game' or 'we need a space game'), or did you come up with your own ideas and then follow through with them?*

**RC:** Both were done at Odyssey. I was assigned games to produce. Others who had more experience and success were given the freedom to create their own games (talk to Bob Harris). But as the "Great Crash" of the game industry approached, companies (including Odyssey) started relying on movie titles to win market share. So overall, creative freedom was an illusion.




**You type, it talks. Feel free to type in portions of our interview to listen to the "Virtual Audio" version on your Odyssey2!**

**DP:** *What was a typical day at work like?*

**RC:** I would go in early before eight am usually and stay late until six pm. Leave for dinner and then come back and put in some more hours. In hindsight, I probably should have relaxed more and enjoyed myself. I took it all too seriously.

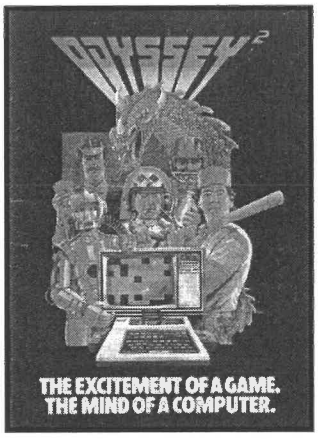
**DP:** *Did the designers ever go out to the arcade as part of the job? For inspiration? For fun? Might there have been arcade games at the Odyssey offices?*

**RC:** Yes, sometimes a group of us would go out at lunch or later during the day for a quick game, or to see what the arcade world was doing. Please remember, the arcade world and the Odyssey game world were different. The Odyssey system was low powered compared to the arcade systems.

Later after **K.C. Munchkin**, some arcade games started showing up. They were mostly for us to look at and evaluate for contract work with arcade manufacturers. They could hit the arcade and home video game markets at the same time.

**DP:** *What is the deal with all the exclamation points! in the game titles, manual, boxes, etc?*

**RC:** I'm not sure. That was handled by a different department as far as I know. But I would imagine it was to communicate excitement. Just a guess.




**The excitement of a game. The mind of a computer. The artwork of the heavens.**

**DP:** *Who were some of your colleagues at work? Do you know who might have designed the following games?* Baseball, Bowling/ Basketball, Computer Golf, Computer Intro, Cosmic Conflict, Dynasty, Football.

**RC:** I primarily worked with Jim Butler and Bob Harris and Sam Overton (Manager). My guess is Sam or Ralph would know who wrote the games. Some were created before I got there.

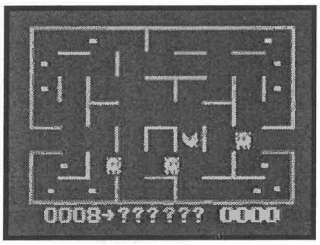
**DP:** *Do you still keep in touch with any of your 02 era co-workers?*

**RC:** No, not really. I get a card from n Butler's family at Christmas and when special events happen in their family. But other than that, no. Bob Harris is still in Knoxville last I heard.

**DP:** *Did you meet with Ralph "Father of Videogames" Baer? What was he like to work with?*

**RC:** I think I did. One day we all took a trip to another developer's office (Home Office). If that was him, then he was a charming man and knew what he was doing. I have great respect for him. I actually used some of his ideas in my business.

**DP:** *Do you still program video games? Play video games? What are your favorite video games? Do you prefer the "old" (pre-1985) or "new" (post 1989) video games?*



**Like everyone else on the planet, Robert is a fan of K.C. Munchkin!**

**RC:** No I gave up programming video games after leaving Odyssey. I could never get fired up about them. But I still enjoy computer graphics.

**DP:** *What is / are your favorite 02 games(s)?*

**RC:** Probably K.C. Munchkin and **Killer Bees**.

**DP:** *Considering that K.C. Munchkin was one of the first really big hits for the 02, what was the mood around the office (presuming you guys holed up in an office) when the dreaded Atari lawsuit was going down? Disinterest, low morale, frustration?*

**The Odyssey2, on display at the 1983 CES. Check out those groovy kiosks!**

**RC:** For me, it was shock and frustration. The game was similar but not a copy. It is like the Macintosh and Windows. I felt that the legal system did not understand the differences. I believe it had an impact on the gaming industry.

**DP:** *Do you recall working on any projects for the ill-fated 03 system?*

**RC:** No, I left Odyssey about that time.

**DP:** *Did you program any hidden "secrets" into your games? For example Robert Harris threw a lot of "credits", including your name, into his excellent* Killer Bees *game.*

**RC:** Sorry no. I always meant to but there was never enough time. My games were always late.

**DP:** *Do you fondly remember the past video game eras, or do you look at it as just another job?*

**RC:** Actually, neither. It was an adventure. I thought I might even make some money at it. But I didn't understand the industry, the cycles, and the company's motivations. For me, it was an adventure that turned bad. But it was NEVER JUST A JOB!

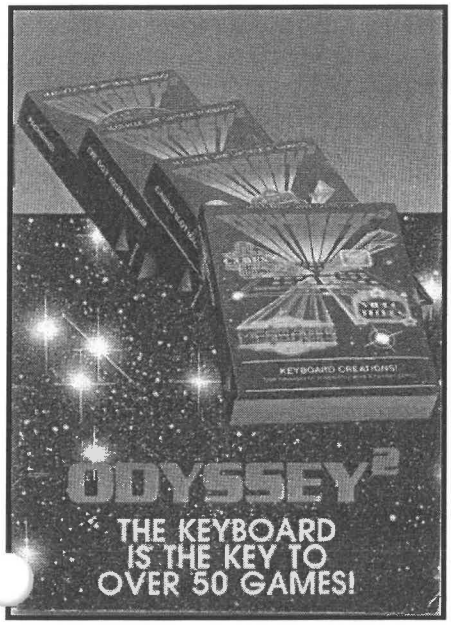
**DP:** *What was it like when the market crashed in 1984? Were people panicking ala the 1920's, or was it just time to move on to different projects?*

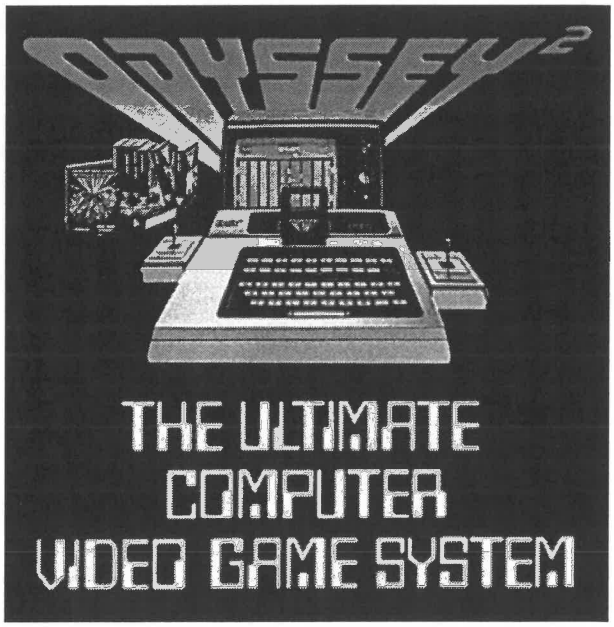
**RC:** I felt enough pressure to leave. I just moved on. I returned to Florida and continued working in computer graphics.

**DP:** *What is your assessment of a bunch of fanboys and girls who spend this much time and energy playing videogames, writing about videogames, and bothering total strangers about videogames that they once developed? (Feel free to really let us have it. We have no illusions about our chosen station in life!)*

**RC:** I think it is GREAT! :) If you enjoy it and it doesn't hurt others and is not immoral, do it. I wish I had known you guys earlier. You seem to have the spirit that was missing back then (1982-1984).

P.S.: Our stations in life are NEVER what they seem. ☒



# DVD de jour

by Dave Giarrusso

## The Specials

Distributor: Regent Entertainment, 2000. Director: Craig Mazin. Aspect ratio: 1.85:1. Sound: Stereo (?). Running time: 89 minutes. (US region 1 disc reviewed)

**Plot**: "Not as good as other superheroes. But definitely better than you." So reads the tagline to The Specials. And really, that pretty much sums up this flick. When other superhero teams are too busy to take on additional work, the Specials (the sixth or seventh best team in the world) steps up to the plate. As you might have guessed, they aren't called upon too often, so they have lots of time on their hands. And idle hands, well. You know. The Specials wind up wasting their time on petty arguments and rivalries with each other. They're like a group of ten year olds who haven't figured out how to play nice. And their egos threaten to tear the group apart, even as they land their very own line of action figures. The result? Hilarious.

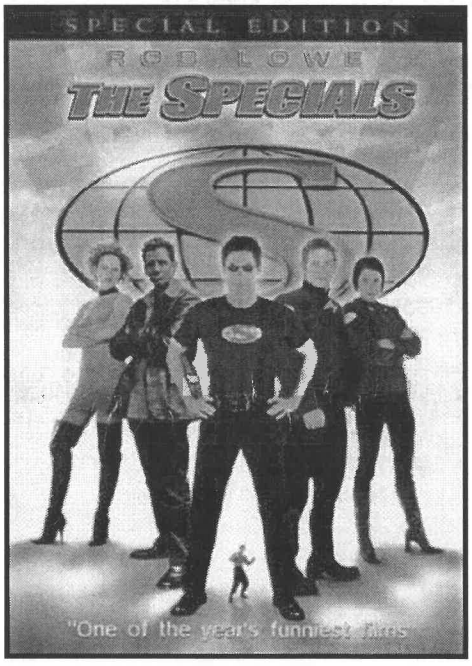
**Extras**: You get the usual handful of deleted scenes, a video and commercial (that I won't describe because they're part of the film) and the trailer. HOWEVER: do yourself a favor and don't watch the trailer until AFTER you watch the film. If you were wondering why you never heard of The Specials, you'll know why after you see the trailer. It's as if the trailer's sole purpose was to make certain that the movie failed. Which, it probably did. I never heard of it until it was on DVD.

**Picture**: The picture is quite good throughout most of the film. You'll only notice a few instances of severe compression and artifacting.

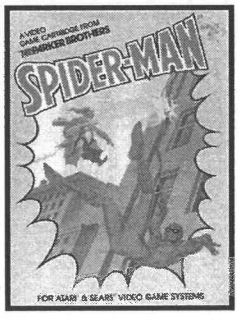
**Sound**: Not much to say here. The sound is serviceable, but it won't knock your socks off.

**Overall Feel**: UNlike the crapstorm that was *Mystery Men*, this movie is freakin' hilarious. Period. At the risk of making an unfair comparison, it's almost done in the same vein as Christopher Guest's *Waiting For Guffman*, *Best in Show* and *This Is Spinal Tap*. It doesn't take itself too seriously, and if you're not laughing within the first five minutes, you're probably not gonna enjoy the ride. And like Guest's mockumentaries, you get a lot of side splittingly funny "off the cuff" kinds of "confessional" scenes that are priceless.

If you don't dig Guest's stuff, you probably won't get this flick either. But if you're a fan of the silly yet subtle and very clever films, you owe it to yourself to see this movie today. My recommendation is to buy this one, even if you have to pay a slightly higher price through an online movie house to get it. It's a movie that you can watch again and again, and even knowing how the story turns out, you'll laugh at it again and again. Plus, you'll want to go back and watch the stuff that you missed the first few times around. It's a great one. The Specials is one of the best movies you've never heard of. Go get it, or else, "you don't rock!"

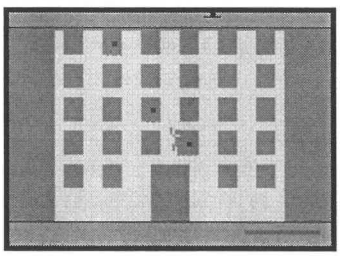


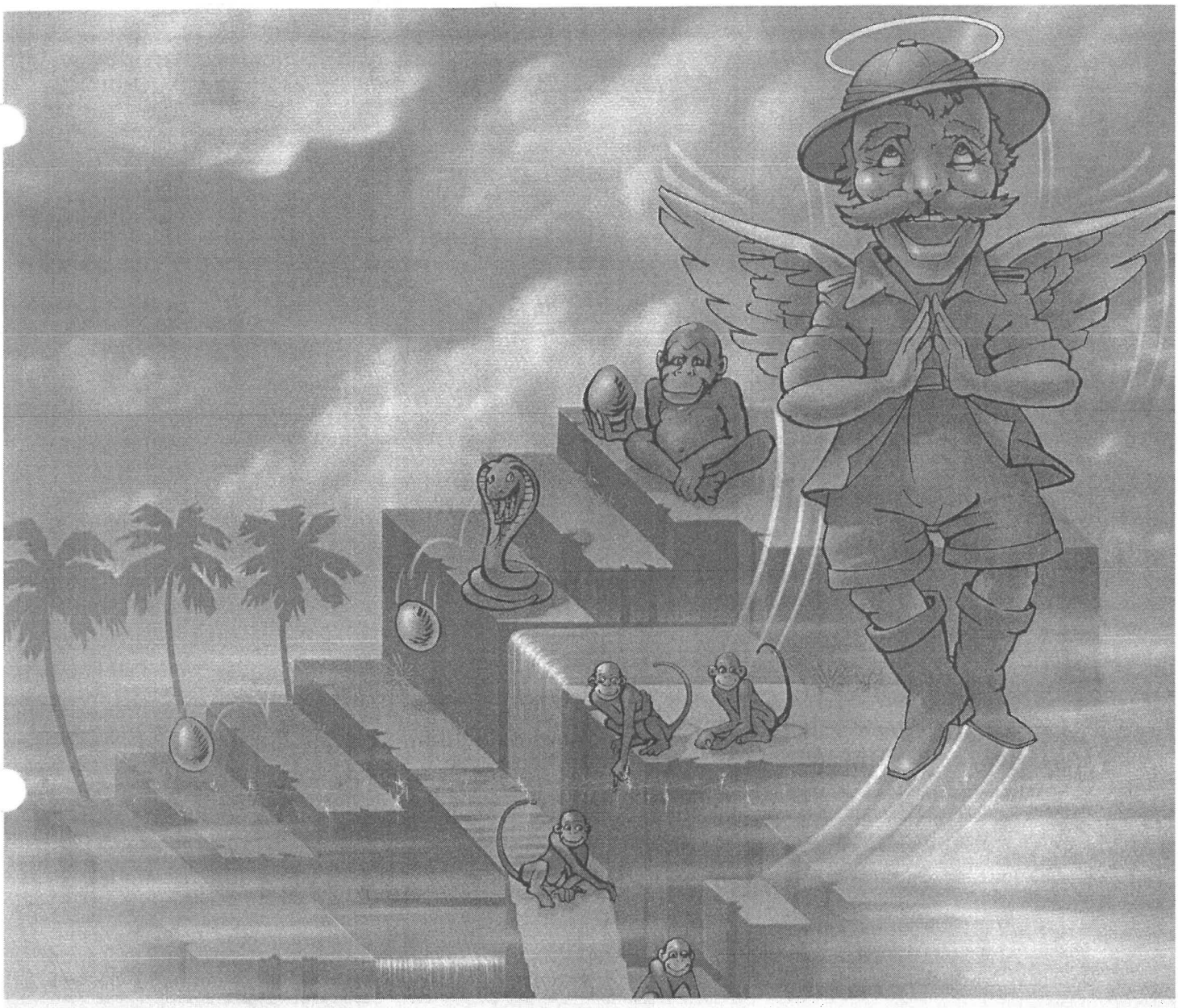

**Yes. The cast includes Rob Lowe, Thomas Hayden Church, and Jaime Kennedy. And you know what? IT'S STILL FUNNY. Seriously. Oh, and there are several cute chicks in it too.**



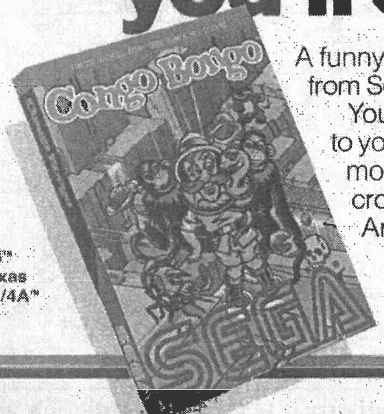

*Well, we're on a roll here. Two issues, two DVDs without any game references. But look on the bright side, gang! The scales are tipped so heavily against movie-licensed games being any good, it's probably for the best that the Specials is only a movie.*

*If you're in the mood for a good superhero video game, you'll definitely want to check out Spider-Man for the Atari 2600. Catchy theme music, fun, fair gameplay, and the Green Goblin? You can't miss! Load up your web shooters and save the day!*





# When you play Congo Bongo you'll die laughing.




A funny thing happens when you play Congo Bongo, the new home game from Sega. In fact, a lot of funny things happen.

You have to get to Congo, the mighty ape, before the jungle beasts get to you. Dodge falling coconuts as you scale Monkey Mountain. Shake the monkey from your back and chase Congo onto the lagoon screen. Then cross the water on the backs of hippos, lily pads and hunter-eating fish. And do it all before Congo makes a monkey out of you.

But watch your step – one slip and it's off to hunter heaven.

Congo Bongo. Straight from the arcade and into your home. It's more fun than a barrel of, well, monkeys.

**Made for:**
**Atari® 2600™**
**Atari® 5200™**
**Atari® Home Computers,**
**Commodore 64™ and VIC-20;™ Texas Instruments 99/4A™**
**Intellivision®**

SEGA®

The Arcade Winners.

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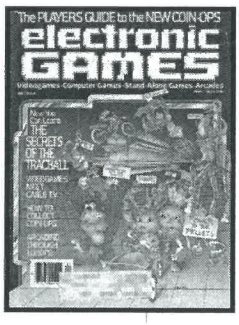
# NOTE-WORTHY

## THE DP-EG ALLIANCE!

By now, you know that Joe Santulli was able to CONvince industry legend Bill Kunkel into penning "The Kunkel Report" exclusively for the Digital Press website. BUT! Did you also know that the other pair of Electronic Games founders, Arnie Katz and Joyce Worley recently rejoined Kunkel for a new internet adventure? EGmemories.com will be online very soon, and in addition to offering gamers a place to auction off their extra copies of **Quadrun** and **Gubble**, the mighty trio of Katz, Kunkel and Worley will be onhand to share some of their very own experiences with YOU. Oh, and they just might have some extraordinary finds in their attics and basements that will be appearing on the auction block from time to time. Look for it soon!




## CGE 2K4 DATES SET!

Classic Gaming Expo will be held August 21 and 22 at the San Jose Convention Center in San Jose, California. Come on out to sunny CA and visit the video gaming industry's largest show dedicated to the preservation and celebration of video game history. Visit www.cgexpo.com for all the latest announcements!

**Digital Press is dedicated to the memory of my best friend and DP co-creator, Kevin Oleniacz.**

**Kevin's spirit will be with us through every homing missile fired, knockout punch delivered, UFO destroyed, and finish line crossed.**

**Play recklessly. Think positively. Live EVERY moment to the fullest.**